

'Brides' seek ideal match – for bone marrow cause

FOUR "brides" in wedding gowns were on the prowl at Raffles Place yesterday in the hope of finding someone to say "I do".

The group actually comprised students raising awareness of the Bone Marrow Donor Programme (BMDP), and members walked around asking the lunchtime crowd if they wanted to donate cash or sign up to become a donor.

There are currently 40,000 people on Singapore's only register of voluntary bone marrow donors.

For patients with leukaemia and other blood-related illnesses, the chance of finding a donor match is one in 20,000.

"The idea is that finding the perfect donor is just as difficult as finding your life partner on the streets," said one of the organisers and "brides", National Junior College student Qian Dixin, 17.

The unusual sight attracted the attention of undergraduate Ong Heng Lai, 22, who gave some cash. "It's



Ms Kwa Mee Ling, 20, a Singapore Management University student, was one of the "brides" at Raffles Place yesterday asking people for cash donations for the Bone Marrow Donor Programme or to sign up as donors. Those who made donations were given a Hershey's chocolate kiss. PHOTO: LIM YAOHUI FOR THE STRAITS TIMES

very eye-catching," he said.

Dixin, together with three schoolmates, adopted BMDP under the Citi-YMCA Youth For Causes pro-

gramme.

A partnership by Citi Singapore bank and the YMCA of Singapore, it provides seed funding to youth to

start an initiative that will benefit a non-profit organisation of their choice.

MELISSA LIN